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**A Jew at Heart**

All ten of the aseres hadibros, can be categorised in one of three categories: thought, speech or action.

When you go through this exercise, a fascinating pattern emerges. Let’s see….

The first two commandments (belief in Hashem and no other gods) are both thoughts. The next two (not taking Hashem’s Name in vain and remembering Shabbos) involve speech and the fifth (honouring parents) involves action. We go from thought to speech to action.

Interestingly, in the next five of the aseres hadibros, the order is reversed. Commandments numbers 6, 7 and 8 (murder, adultery, kidnap) are actions, 9 (false witness) involves speech and 10 (jealousy) is a thought. Action to speech to thought.

What is behind this pattern reversal?

The Abarbanel offers a fascinating explanation. We know that the aseres hadibros are divided into two sections. The first five commandments are bein odom la’Mokom (between man and Hashem) and the second five are bein odom l’chaveiro (between man and man).

All too often, when it comes to mitzvos that are bein odom la’Mokom, people rationalise and say that it is enough to be a Jew at heart. Does the Almighty really want me to watch what I say? Is my speech so important? And action? Do I really need to be careful how I make a hot cup of tea on Shabbos?

The order of the first five commandments is telling us: not only must we serve Hashem in thought, but also in deed and also in action.

When it comes to interactions between man and man, the opposite is found. People say that so long as I am kind to others, what I say about them behind their backs and certainly what I think about them is not so important.

The Torah therefore tells us otherwise, For bein odom l’chaveiro, it is not enough to be kind in deed alone, but we have to take care in how speak about our fellow man and even how we think about others.

Some years ago, a colleague of mine and mechanech par excellence was once on a bus in Eretz Yisroel. It didn’t take long before he struck up a conversation with the secular Israeli he was sitting next to. The chiloni Jew explained that although he showed no external signs of religiosity, he was “dati ba’lev” – a Jew at heart.

Sometime later the conversation turned to chareidim and the army and the secular Jew challenged my fellow Rebbe: “Why didn’t you go to the army?”

My friend responded: “Ani chayal ba’lev” – I am a soldier at heart.

“That’s ridiculous” said the chiloni. “How can you be a chayal ba’lev?”

“Well you can’t be dati ba’lev either”, was the reply.

Certainly, being dati ba’lev is a start and is no doubt an expression of a dormant neshomo, but Yiddishkeit is about doing and action. It’s less about theology and more about a way of life. It’s **כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ וְאֹרֶךְ יָמֵינוּ**.

And this is the lesson of the aseres hadibros. Both sets of luchos go from kal to more chomur. The first set of 5 commandments go from thought (1,2) to speech (3,4) to action (5) and the second set of 5 commandments go from action (6,7,8) to speech (9) to thought (10).

For bein odom la’Mokom, we serve Hashem not only in thought, but also in speech and also in action and when it comes to bein odom l’chaveiro, we interact with our fellows not just in action but in speech and thought too - **כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ**.

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